counseling, retraining and redeployment (CRR) of these workers. Under this scheme the employees are exposed to such programmes for gainful rehabilitation.

Promotion of handloom clothes

†4478. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state the scheme of Government to promote handloom clothes in the wake of the termination of multifibre agreement in December, 2004?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): In the new Foreign Trade Policy 2004–09, handlooms has been identified as a thrust sector under Special Focus Initiatives and special facilities have been extended to the sector. Government has decided to develop a trademark for handloom on lines similar to "Woolmark" and "Silkmark", which will enable handloom products to develop a niche market with a distinct identity. Apart from the new Foreign Trade Policy, the following steps have been taken/are being taken to boost exports of handloom products:

(a) Organisation of Buyer-Seller Meets in important markets abroad;

(b) Participation in leading International fairs & exhibitions;

(c) Development & diversification of the product range;

(d) Dissemination of market intelligence and trade information through the Handloom Export Promotion Council;

(e) Availability of incentives to exports under the different export promotion schemes such as Duty Entitlement Pass Books Scheme/ Duty Drawback Scheme etc;

(f) Financial assistance provided under the Handloom Export Scheme for development of exportable products and publicity & marketing thereof;

(g) Assistance to Handloom Export Promotion Council under the MDA Scheme for market promotion activities.

Impact of removal of quotas of textiles

4479. SHRI SHAHID SIDDiQUI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the impact of removal of quotas of textile so far;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(b) whether it has been at par with India's expectations in this area;

(c) the plans made to modernise the textile industry in India and how far have they been successfully implemented;

(d) funds spent on this process in the last two years; and

(e) what steps are being taken for better marketing of handloom in the international market?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) and (b) It is too early to make a realistic assessment of the impact of removal of quotas on India's textiles and clothing exports.

(c) Government has been taking a number of steps from time to time to strengthen domestic textile industry for meeting the growing global competition. Some of the important initiatives taken are:

(i) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.

(ii) To improve the productivity and quality of cotton, Government has launched Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC). The mission comprises four mini-missions, which are being jointly implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Textiles. One of the important ingredients of the Mission is to improve cotton processing facilities by upgrading/modernizing the existing ginning and pressing facilities and setting up of new market yards/improvement of existing market yards.

(iii) The Government has launched a centrally sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres to give fillip to exports.

(w) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme titled "Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

(v) The fiscal duty structure has been generally rationalised to achieve growth and maximum value addition within the country. Except

for mandatory excise duty on man-made filament yarns and man-made staple fibres, the whole value addition chain has been given excise exemption option.

(vi) The import of specified textiles and garment machinery items has been allowed at concessional rate of customs duty to encourage investments and to make our textile products competitive in the global market. The cost of machinery has also been reduced through fiscal policy measures.

(vii) Duty-free imports of 21 items of trimmings and embellishment items are allowed to the garment exporters, upto 3% of their actual export performance during the previous year.

(viii) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its seven branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various . courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design,merchandising and marketing.

(ix) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the garments/textiles pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

(x) The Government has de-reserved the readymade garments, hosiery and knitwear from the SSI sector.

(Amount in Rs. crores)

Period	Applications Sanctioned			Applications Disbursed		
	No.	Project Cost	Amount	No.	Project Cost	Amount
2003-04 & 2004-05 (As on 28.2.2005)	1797	10243	4188	1565	7827	2606

(e) Government has been taking a number of measures for promoting handloom exports, such as, encouraging exporters to participate in buyer-seller meets, fairs and exhibitions, special arrangements for duty free import of raw materials for export production; product development and quality upgradation through appropriate training programme etc.